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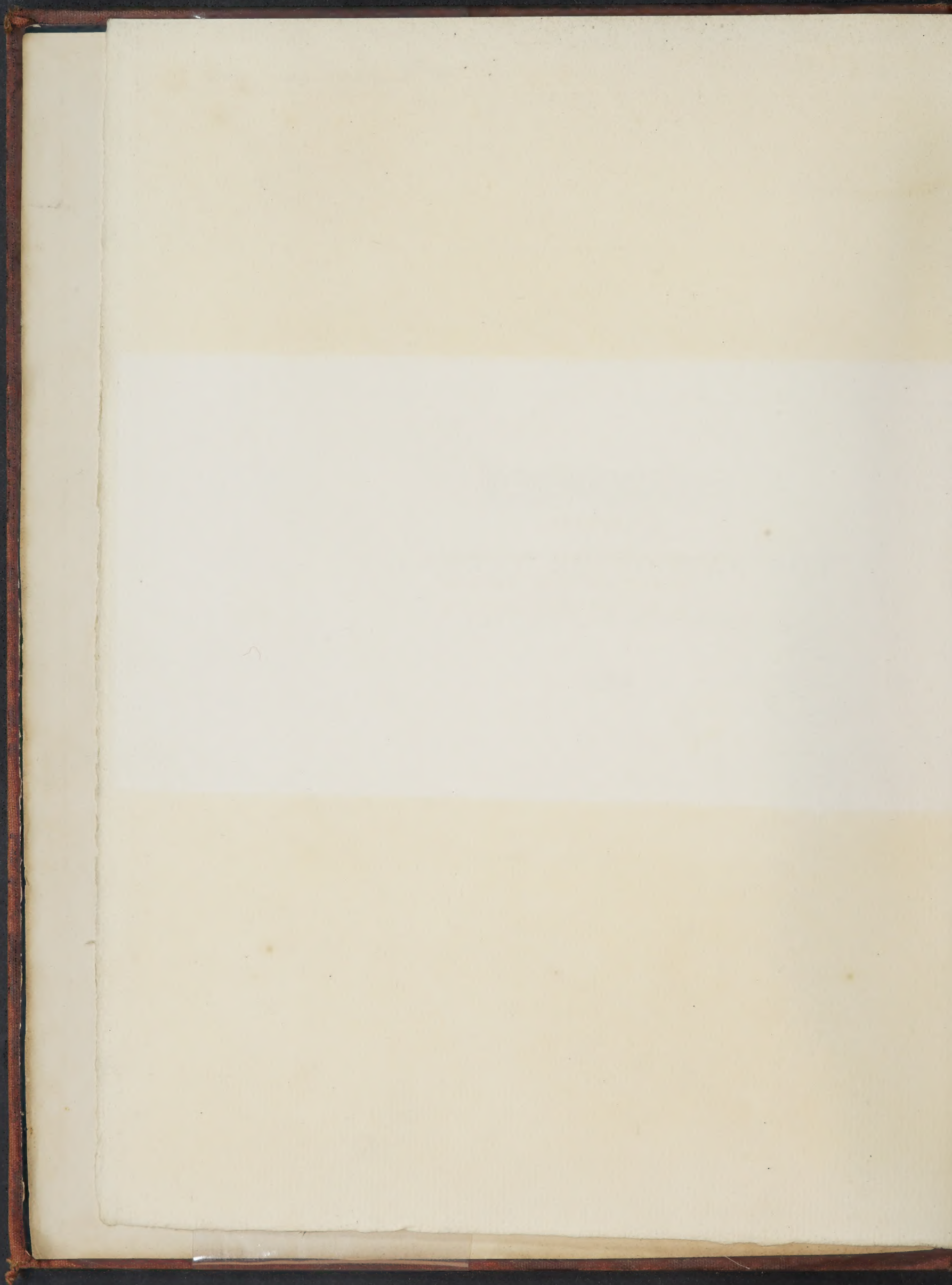
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LOS BANDOS DE VERONA.

MONTESCOS Y CAPELETES.



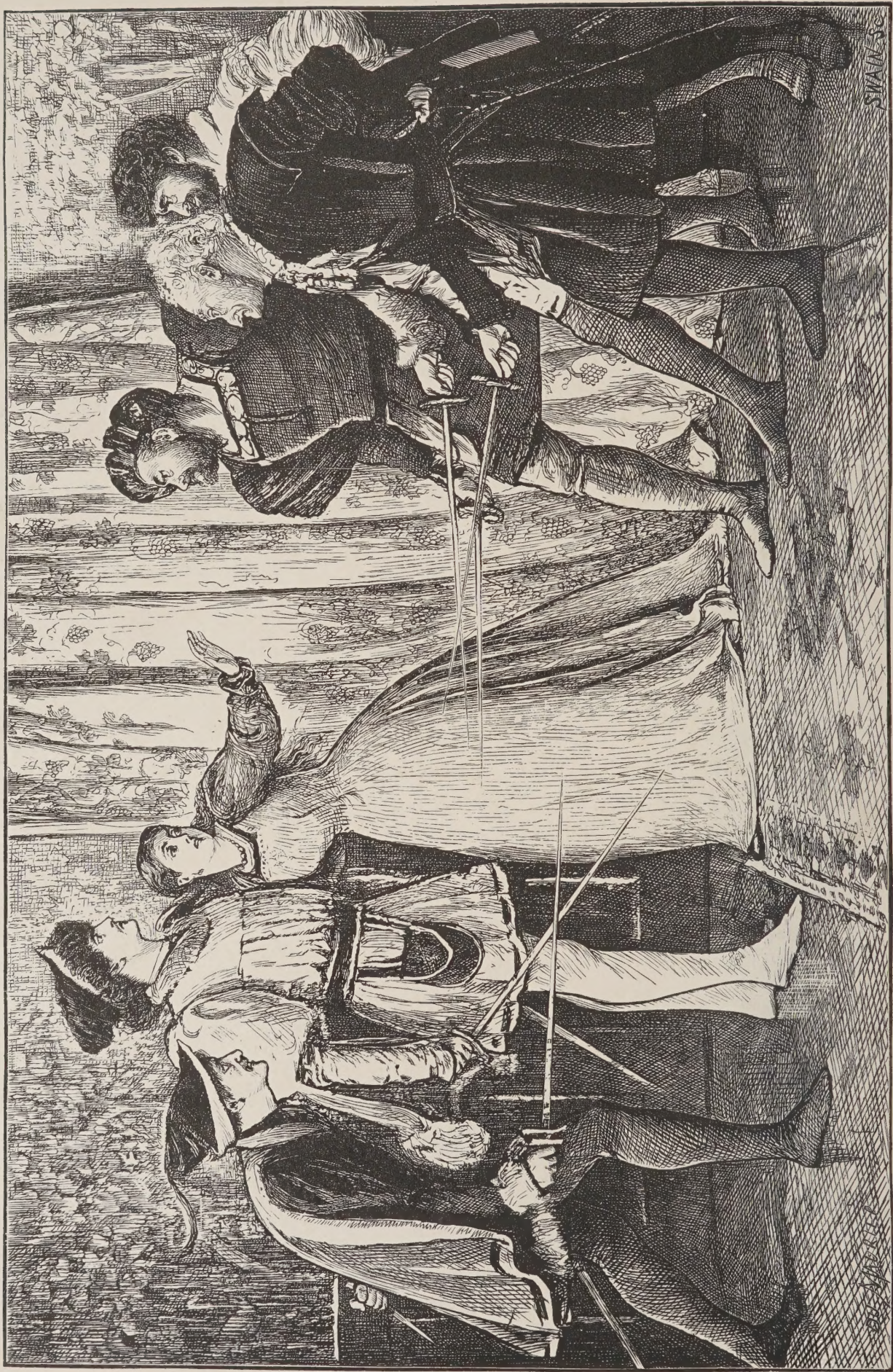


ERRATA.

Page 14, line 6, *for* "Julia," *read* "Elena."

,, 24, at foot, *for* "Juliet," *read* "Julia."

,, 25, line 10, *for* "Juliet," *read* "Julia."



LOS BANDOS DE VERONA.

MONTESCOS Y CAPELETES.

BY FRANCISCO DE ROJAS Y ZORRILLA.

ENGLISHED BY F. W. COSENS.



LONDON:

PRINTED AT THE CHISWICK PRESS

FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION.

1874.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

ALEJANDRO ROMEO.

CARLOS ROMEO.

ANTONIO CAPELETE.

ANDRÉS CAPELETE.

EL CONDE PARIS.

LEONOR.

GRACIOSO.

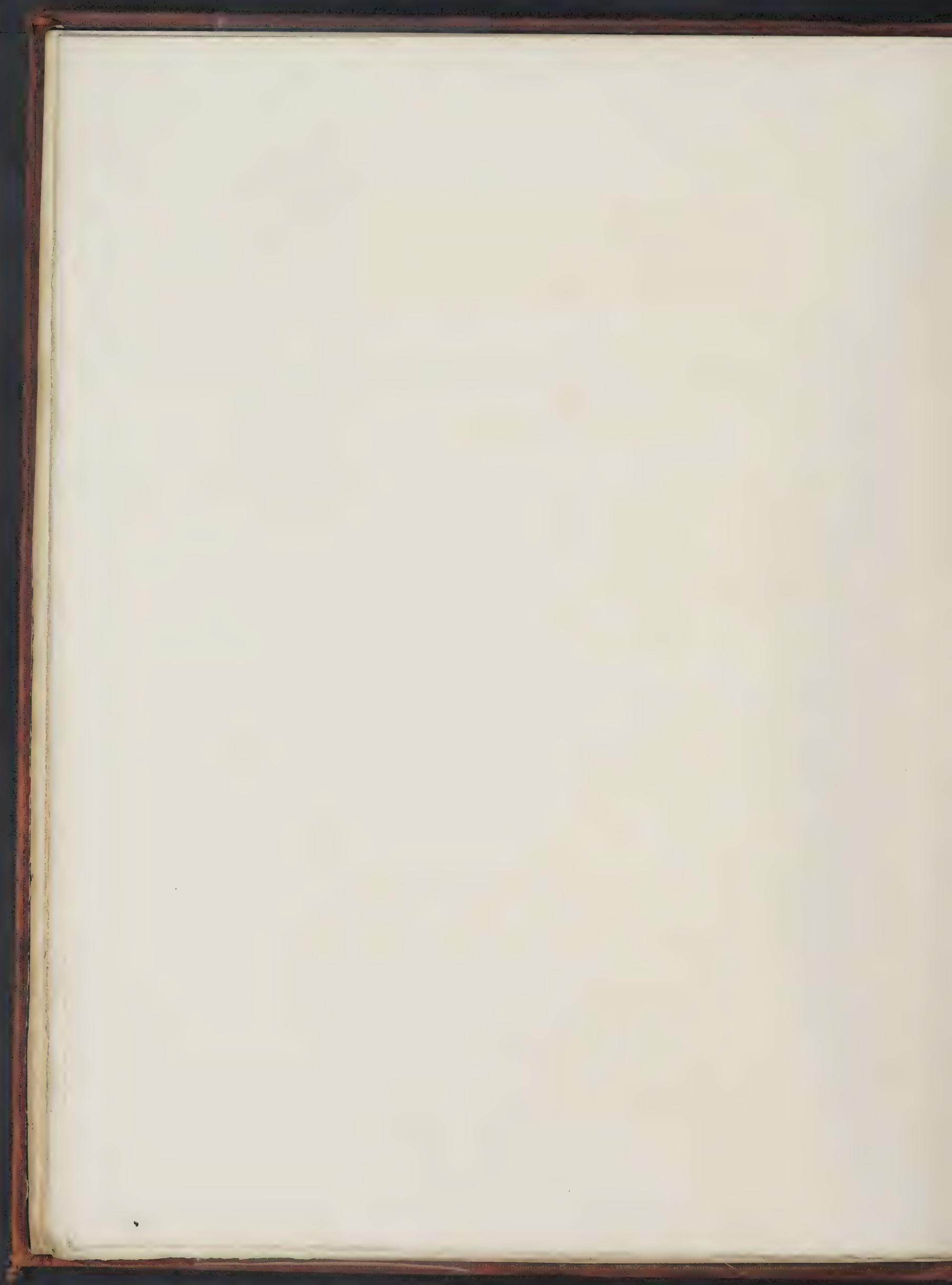
OTAVIO (*a servant*).

Soldiers.

JULIA CAPELETE.

ELENA ROMEO.

ESPERANZA (*a servant*).





INTRODUCTION.

LOS Bandos de Verona Montescos y Capeletes," has been bracketed by Shakespearian commentators with another Spanish play, the "Castelvines y Monteses" of Lope de Vega, as illustrative of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet; the author, Francisco de Rojas y Zorrilla, has certainly to some extent availed himself of the Italian tradition dramatized by Shakespeare, but has ignored the tragic aspect of the history of the hapless lovers of Verona, whom he marries in the end, and makes happy ever afterwards.

Rojas succeeded Lope de Vega as a writer for the stage; being in his thirtieth year, and one of the most popular dramatists of the day, when that distinguished "Phoenix of the geniuses" died. Rojas penned a mortuary sonnet of average merit on the occasion of Lope's decease.

I am inclined to think that English students of Shakespeare will scarcely value, as German commentators appear to do, this Spanish play ; it is inferior in every way to the "Castelvines y Monteses" of Lope de Vega.

Los Bandos de Verona is printed in the second volume of Rojas' collected works, Madrid, 1680, and reprinted in one of the volumes of the "Biblioteca de Autores Españoles," Madrid, 1861.

A Spanish critic admits that Rojas was not free from that "culteranismo which characterized the age in which he wrote ;" his works vary in style, in language, and in merit ; certainly Los Bandos de Verona is not one of his best productions.

I have only translated at length such portions of this play as bear some reference to Shakespeare's tragedy, connecting the scenes so as to render the whole work intelligible to those who feel an interest in every scrap that in the slightest degree can claim to be illustrative of the great dramatist's work.

F. W. C.

27, Queen's Gate, Kensington.
September, 1874.



LOS BANDOS DE VERONA.



LOS Bandos de Verona" opens with a confidential interview between Julia Capelete and Elena, Romeo's sister, the unhappy wife of the Count Paris, who dislikes and neglects her.

ELENA.

Why shed such bitter tears, sweet Julia ?
Trust all your idle girlish griefs to me.
My sorrows fester at my aching heart,
And yet I weep not.

JULIA.

Alas ! I hourly weep, and weep for love.

ELENA.

And I weep not.
A slighted woman is too proud to weep.

B

JULIA.

I love, am lov'd, and yet, alas ! I weep ;
And weep because I love.

ELENA.

I love, alas ! lacking that guerdon, which
Love ever claims as faithful lovers' due.

JULIA.

Thou knowest my lover and my lord, who loves
Me as none other loves ?

ELENA.

I love my lord as loving lover loves ;
While he, alas ! chills love with cold neglect.

Julia here relates at considerable length the causes and effects of the bitter feud then raging between the Capeletes and Montescos, the "Bandos de Verona." This feud arose thus :—At a friendly jousting, or passage of arms, Otavio Romeo, the head of the Montesco faction, and father of Elena Romeo, slew accidentally Luis Capelete, the brother of Julia, his lance-point entering between the bars of his opponent's helmet. The Capeletes are furious, and Otavio Romeo is ultimately slain.

JULIA.

Verona three long years this strife hath seen,
This rivalry of two most ancient houses,

Both in the lustre of nobility ;
Montesco one, the other Capelete.
Amid the stored-up ashes of this fatal feud
A deadly hatred ever smouldering lies.
This mutual loathing flickers oft, nor lacks
Fuel to fan the embers into flame ;
The Capeletes in their conflicts shout,
" Long live the Capeletes ! " Each Montesco
Affrights the air with, " Down with Capeletes ! "
A Capelete cursing here his doom,
There a Montesco wounded, struggling shrinks
I' the icy grasp of death.

Julia then relates how on one occasion Romeo, bent on revenge, forced his way into her father's house, breaking in upon her privacy like a maniac ; and, sword in hand, seeking her father's life, he suddenly stabs a servant who attempts to bar his way,

Not sparing even our noble falcon, which,
Fettered and shackled, dozed upon his perch.

Rushing into Julia's presence, bent upon her immediate destruction, he roughly seizes her arm, while she, affrighted, kerchief in hand, seeks to veil her face.

Each eyelid moist with stringed pearls of tears,
Mine utterance choked, in vain I veil my face ;
The dripping lawn he snatcheth from my hand,

And face to face we for an instant gaze,
Mine eyes wide open and red-rimm'd with grief,
He looks abashed, and stands irresolute,
Then, bowing lowly, starts like stricken deer,
And leaves me trembling and in tears.

Julia then relates the result of another interview, and how they met often, when—

His courtship was so gentle and refined,
So tender, so respectful and restrained,
I could not choose but listen ; and anon
He whispered in my ear sweet falsities,
Which we poor women, knowing but too well
What truth they lack, yet cannot, will not doubt.
Nightly he sought my latticed window bars,
Entreats, complains, and almost feigns offence,
While I, alas ! gave willing ear to all.
Like to a spoiled child he coaxeth me,
And craves discourse within the bars, while I,
Still doubting, as a maiden should, his vows,
His truth, his honesty, at last consent.

Other interviews are arranged by Julia's attendant until,—

We greet each other daily though by stealth.
The dream of maddening love doth hourly wake.
Until I fear myself—a sad moment that
Wherein a trusting woman doth suspect herself.

Julia's father (Old Capelete) proposes a marriage between Julia and her cousin Andrés.

Oh ! aching heart !

This day my father doth desire that I
Should wed Andrés.

To wed brave Romeo is beyond my hope.
He is my father's foe, and I, his child,
Forgive him not the slaughter of our kin ;
And yet I wish, although I dare not hope,
To wed where I do love so madly true.
Oblivion, hopeless hope ! to wed Andrés
Can never be ; to obey my father
Is to be faithless to mine auguries ;
To feign death is impossible ; to despair,
The action of a coward ; to forget, alas !
A potent poison, but no cure.

Romeo having despatched his servant (Julia's father being from home) to announce an intended visit, the servant is detained on the way, so that Romeo and his cousin Carlos surprise Julia and Elena by entering unexpectedly and unannounced. Julia, with maidenly reserve, remarks—

Surely, Sir, it is not honest love that prompts
Thy sudden presence, an unbidden guest.

ROMEO.

Incredulous sceptic, doubting, lovely queen,
Mine errand shall at once be named to thee,
Art thou alone?

JULIA.

Your sister, Sir, doth bear me company ;
I pray you, Sir, to leave me now.
Release my hand.

ROMEO.

My lovely queen, my tongue lacks confidence,
And yet how dare I longer silence keep.
Sweet angel, 'tis thy father that I seek.

JULIA.

My father ! wherefore ? And for what, I pray ?

ROMEO.

To say I love thee, spite his bitter hate ;
To claim you as Montesco's own sweet wife.
To die of hope deferr'd is keen and deadly
As your proud kindred's hate ;
The hatred that divides our noble houses
Sleeps in its embers and ere long may die.
Let not my faith to thee be set as naught
E'en should I die for love of thee.

JULIA.

Is Romeo blind
To all the ills such rashness would ensure?

ROMEO.

Seek not, sweet love, to change my fixed resolve.

A knocking is now heard; Julia becomes alarmed lest it should prove to be her father; Romeo's servant, the comic man, or "Gracioso," enters in a wretched plight, covered with mud and mortar; he proceeds to give a very full and circumstantial account of his misfortunes and the cause of the delay. Having been pelted with mortar by some bricklayers, one of whom discovers that he is a Capelete, he then escapes, and so disfigured, appears upon the stage. After this interruption the interview continues, Romeo agreeing, however, to do Julia's bidding.

JULIA.

To-night we'll meet, and then we may agree
How his consent by gentleness to gain,
And not to force his now unwilling ear.

ROMEO.

My venturous bark has never found a safe
And welcome anchorage. Still——

JULIA.

My love's as steadfast as my will is firm,
Though all the Capeletes say me nay.

ROMEO.

Sweet Julia ! loving, trusting heart ! No sire,
No fate shall ever change my soul's desire.

JULIA.

Should time e'er make you changeling, Romeo,
I'd rather——

ROMEO.

What ?

JULIA.

That you had hated than forgotten me.

ROMEO.

Is then the fiercest hate of those we fondly love
Better than dark oblivion's shade ?

JULIA.

Your poor opinion lacketh wit, methinks,
And wisdom, too ; for he who fiercely hates
Despises, but forgets not.

ROMEO.

Nay, but, sweet Love, oblivion may find
Some balm, but hate no remedy of love.
Hate ofttimes waits on jealousy, 'tis true,
But love will ne'er be servitor to hate.

JULIA.

He who doth hate, and hotly hateth too,
E'en in his hating doth remember love ;
While he who basely doth forget his love
Is hateful in his own forgetfulness.
I'd rather know the hatred of my love,
Than feel oblivion's shameful slight.

ROMEO.

And yet all women have maintained that hate
Is but revenge disguised.

Here follows a somewhat tedious dissertation upon hatred and revenge, in which Elena and the Gracioso take part. The traditional three doors, one centre, one right, and one left centre, are now brought into play. Romeo, Carlos his friend, Elena and the Gracioso, are all compelled suddenly to hide, Old Capelete and his nephew Andrés appearing upon the scene. Andrés remarks that, if not much mistaken, he heard a man's voice as he ascended the stairs. Julia tells a downright falsehood, sarcastically observing—

My cousin, sir, is hard of credence ; and
Aping a brother's privilege, doubts
A simple wayward woman's nay.

Andrés offers to retire, but Old Capelete, whose suspicions are aroused, insists upon an immediate search being made. Julia naturally becomes alarmed, and the Gracioso is discovered ; being closely interrogated, but aided by Esperanza, Julia's maid, he rescues Julia by assuring Old Capelete that he has been sent by a builder to replace some loose tiles upon the roof, and so escapes. Andrés, supported by Old Capelete, presses his suit, which Julia respectfully declines, 'spite her father's frowns, and begs Andrés, with dignity, to quit her presence. He does so, when Count Paris enters, craving the aid of Old Capelete for some discreet yet prompt act of vengeance against Romeo, his (Count Paris's) wife, and the Montescos generally. Romeo and Elena of course overhear the whole conversation, Count Paris delivering a somewhat tedious and elaborate speech, opening thus—

Most noble and illustrious Capelete,
To whose grey hairs and well-approved steel
Our legions owe their triumphs, and our council
Its strength and its experience.

The Count proceeds to declare how much, hating his wife, he loves sweet Julia ; Old Capelete naturally presses for the reason of this hatred towards his wife, to which the Count replies—

Is hated Romeo not her brother? Sir,
Is she not of vile Montesco's kin, and I
A Capelete? When I did wed Elena
This deadly hatred was unborn.

The Count proceeds to state his determination to sue for a divorce, but to which he admits he can hardly expect Elena to agree. He gives full vent to his passion thus—

Let not a vile Montesco live to breathe
The balmy air we breathe each sunny morn!
Be their cursed ashes scattered to the winds!

Old Capelete replies—

Come, let us go kill this Romeo; thus
The head removed, the other members die.

Old Capelete promises that in the event of the Count obtaining a divorce, he will treat with him for the hand of Julia. The Count takes his leave, and Romeo discovers himself. Old Capelete is furious, and draws his sword upon him; Romeo remains on the defensive, and, in reply to his taunts, remarks—

Just anger is the offspring of true courage, sir,
But treachery of fear.

Andrés now re-enters, accompanied by Count Paris, and on discovering Romeo they shout—

Let Romeo and all Montescos die!

ROMEO.

For such a deed, so many are too few.

JULIA (*addresses her father*).

Father and lord, if I deserve in aught
The true affection which a daughter claims,
Pray moderate your causeless anger. Know
This Romeo is my master and my lord,
And who kills Romeo, love and honour kills.

The Count replies—

Mine arm is nerved to giant strength to strike
The man that I and all Verona hate.

They one and all draw upon Romeo, when his friend Carlos
rushes to his rescue, sword in hand; Julia steps between the com-
batants, exclaiming—

Hold back your swords! No steel, whose e'er it be,
Shall touch my noble Romeo but through me.

[*Exeunt, skirmishing. The COUNT returns, disarmed,
pursued by ROMEO, JULIA, and ELENA.*

ELENA.

Hold! Romeo, hold! How did this fray begin?
He is my husband, am not I thy kin?

[*Partizans of both houses rush in, shout, and exeunt
fighting, and so ends act the first.*



HE second act opens with one of those confidences (usual on the Spanish stage at that period) between master and servant. Romeo discusses with the Gracioso his plan for elopement with Julia, and secures the aid and good offices of the servant, who thus moralizes aside :—

How much requital do all masters make
For that good help a servant can assure them ?
I dare not play him false. This colt is skittish.
Keep your eyes open : to-day I see his heel,
To-morrow I the kicks may chance to feel.

The Gracioso, addressing his master, advises caution, and Romeo replies—

So much precaution
Shows but the faintness of your heart, methinks.

To which the Gracioso replies—

What gains a man by meddling in the strife ?
A water-bearer's daughter for a wife.
Those blustering fellows who from morn to night
Would make you think they only live to fight.
I stabbed him to the heart, I stopp'd his breath,
I fought all three till every one found death.

A fellow hurled a brickbat at my head :
I turned to fight!—no, upon my heel instead.
In a whole skin 'tis better far to sleep,
Than in a skin with holes six inches deep.

Romeo hands a note to the servant, and desires him to convey it with all speed to Julia : the servant then departs, leaving Romeo alone, who thus soliloquizes—

Oh night, dark mourner to the day now dead,
Thou elder daughter to base treachery,
The ray of sunlight dancing on the stream
Thou slayest with thy coldest, blackest shadows !
Accomplice in the cause of love or hate,
Lend your dark aid to me, alas ! a sinner !
Let shadows fall and quickly blot the light,
Thou, the sun's slave, impatient lovers' night.

The Gracioso re-enters laden with roof-tiles, his clothes remaining as at first, covered with lime and mortar ; in this plight he gains admission to the house of Old Capelete, and, not finding Julia, delivers the note to Elena, Romeo's sister, observing—

Heaven help us all ! how many would be brave
If fear were out of fashion !

Elena reads the note : “ So soon as sunset shadows fall, you must proceed to the chief door of San Carlos Church, and there await my coming. Bring Julia with you ; should she hesitate, come

alone, for I have all in readiness for our flight." Meantime, as Old Capelete enters, the Gracioso secretes himself under the convenient table. Count Paris urges to the old man his suit for Julia's hand : he retires and Julia enters, her father, Old Capelete, having summoned her to his presence.

JULIA (*without*).

Who is it calls for Julia Capelete ?

[*Entering.*

You, my lord and father?

OLD CAPELETE.

Yes, I have called you, Julia, my dear child.

Close the room door ! now we're alone.

JULIA (*aside*).

Can he suspect ?

OLD CAPELETE (*aside*).

She knows not my resolve.

JULIA (*aside*).

I feel the faintness of a coward churl ;

And yet to-day my anxious sorrows cease.

OLD CAPELETE.

Julia, sweet girl, thou art my darling child !

GRACIOSO (*from beneath the table*).

Heaven and her mother only that can know.

JULIA.

Oh, father, trembling here I stand alone,
Thy flesh and blood expressed.
My love and duty both thou know'st are thine.

OLD CAPELETE.

Will you obey me, then, when I command?

JULIA.

All duty that a daughter owes I yield.

OLD CAPELETE.

Redeem this debt by wedding with Count Paris.

JULIA.

The Count's Elena's lord, and cannot wed another.

OLD CAPELETE.

Divorced he's free. He's gallant, brave, and comely.

JULIA.

These virtues, sir, concern me not.

OLD CAPELETE.

The Count is of our closest kin.

JULIA.

This moves me not. Am I not free to choose
Where'er my heart may guide? I hate the Count!

GRACIOSO (*from under the table*).

Ha! ha! sweet daughter of the ugly knave,
What a neat answer then she gave!

OLD CAPELETE.

Choose now the Count, or wed thee with Andrés.

JULIA.

You are my father, Sir, 'tis true,
And hold a father's claim to love and duty;
To you pertains the right to speak; to me
The choice to act. You wish me wedded; Sir.
Smile on your spoilt child, and I will listen,
Patient and duteous, to your lightest word.
Love loves not force, but would be free as air.
I must have time to think. To wed's a deed
Done for all life, and sudden haste bad speed.

OLD CAPELETE.

Having your promise then to wed my choice,
I've named the two 'twixt whom your choice must fall.

JULIA.

Then, Sir, my choice on neither rests.

OLD CAPELETE.

Come, child, tell me truth.

Thy blood is mine, but yet 'tis somewhat hotter.
In me the stream is coolèd down by age;
The soul's enchantments sped. Love you in sooth
This Romeo? this traitor of Montesco's kin?

JULIA.

No, my father! (*hesitating*). Should I say Yes: (*aside*)
His death will the stern forfeit be.
Henceforth, Sir, I am silent as the grave.

OLD CAPELETE.

If thou would'st wed this Romeo, child,
My curse should follow such a mad-brain'd choice.
Come, say. 'Tis Andrés or the Count?

JULIA.

Since you will have it so, my choice is made.

OLD CAPELETE.

Good! Good! Well, the Count Paris or Andrés?

JULIA.

For good or ill I love alone young Romeo.

OLD CAPELETE.

Traitress! What! love our house's bitter foe,
Whose sword hath slain our kin? Prepare to die!

Choose either this most subtle poison here,
Or this sharp glistening dagger for your heart.

He places a phial upon the table and a poignard beside it.

JULIA.

My father, why so cruel and so heartless?
Oh, call you this a father's love?

OLD CAPELETE.

Impatient still I wait thy choice.

JULIA.

If choice be mine, then, neither, Sir.
Yet I would not die, but live for Romeo.

OLD CAPELETE.

Traitress! Since prayers and threats are vain,
I tell thee I would rather see thee dead
Than Romeo's wife—that vile Montesco boy!
Choose, then, 'twixt steel and poison'd draught.
Thine eyes and glowing cheek confess thy shame,
And heap dishonour on our noble name.

JULIA.

If to love Romeo be a crime, oh, Sir,
Then living let me sin; but seek my love,

My faithful and most honour'd lord.
I suffer for my crime of loving much ;
So let my love prove expiated crime.

OLD CAPELETE.

My hatred is too deep, too fixed, too keen,
To pass into oblivion. Though forsooth
A daughter's love may trim the beam,
A father's duty shall the balance hold.

JULIA.

If all these speechless words, which through
My tearful eyes distil and fall to earth,
Be voiceless still
To soften anger and revenge in thee,
Then let me die—
Not by thy dagger, lest the gossips say
A cruel father slew his only child,
Because she dared to love brave Romeo.
Now, now, great heaven, be witness I obey ;
And you, oh chaste and beauteous moon !
Hide thy sweet tranquil face for ever.
Bright hope, that did so smile upon my love !
Fate, thou art my liege, and I obey.
See, Sir, I'm ready here to die ; but let
These words be sculptured o'er my tomb—
Thus Julia died for loving Romeo !

She rushes to the table suddenly, seizes the phial and empties it,
Old Capelete attempting, but too late, to stay her hand.

OLD CAPELETE.

Hold, hold, my child, my Julia!
Touch not the poisoned draught.

JULIA.

Too late! too late!
I feel the poison coldly course each vein.
Ah! my poor heart!

OLD CAPELETE.

I did but mean to threaten.

JULIA.

Too late you seek to charm mine ear with sounds
Of gentleness and love. My senses reel.
Romeo! my lord, my loving lord! Andrés!
Oh poison! dagger! death!
Oh cruel pains! revenge! cold, cold!
Alas! my Romeo! *[Falls senseless.]*

Count Paris enters hurriedly, and rushes forward to raise the
prostrate Julia. Old Capelete bids him close the door.

OLD CAPELETE.

Alas! alas! she's dead,
And I, her wretched, foolish father, killed her.

COUNT.

How! Killed her?

OLD CAPELETE.

The poisoned draught—the draught!

COUNT.

Oh! savage, impious act, to slay my life,
Verona's sun, sweet Julia Capelete!

Old Capelete fearing that Romeo will avenge Julia's death on him, the Count and he remove Julia's body to a vault in the church of San Carlos, to which there is private access from the house. The "Gracioso" watches them out, and steals into the street, where he meets his master, Romeo, who questions him with reference to the letter: the "Gracioso" replies by relating, in a very comic style, the facts of the interview between Julia, her father, and the Count Paris; how she drank the poisoned draught, and, calling on the name of Romeo, swooned and died.

ROMEO.

Thou liest, knave; for if thy tale be true,
And Julia dead, how live I now to hear it?
By her sweet light alone I shine. That light
Once paled, how doth the light still dare to shine?
Saw you this, sirrah?

GRACIOSO.

With these two eyes (I am not blind of either,
Knowing not love, the blinder of all eyes)
I saw her father and the Count remove
Along the passage to "San Carlos" vault,
Where all her noble ancestors do sleep,
The body of fair Julia Capelete.

ROMEO.

Julia dead! the planet argent Venus
May pale before the sun, yet still she dies not.
Julia! what! Julia dead and I yet breathe?
Her sweet voice silent, while mine echo shouts?
"Can Julia die and Romeo yet survive?"
Ah! no; if she be dead then Romeo dies.
Come, let us seek her in yon icy vault.
If she be dead indeed, then Romeo
May die and lie beside his sweetest love.
Come, let's away.

Andrés and his servant Otavio now appear upon the scene: the latter explains that he purchased the draught at old Capelete's instigation; but believing it was intended for Esperanza, Julia's waiting woman, the beloved of Otavio, and who is supposed to have assisted Romeo to sundry interviews, Otavio has had it prepared as a simple sleeping draught. By means of Esperanza, Otavio secures the key of the church, where he and Andrés

propose to hide until Julia's swoon has passed, when, under the cover of the darkness, they intend to force her into a carriage and carry her off. Old Capelete and the Count enter the church while Andrés and Otavio retire. The key having been conveniently left, and found in the lock by Romeo and the "Gracioso," they enter the church. Romeo is, of course, full of courage; the "Gracioso" as much a coward: they remove the stone from the entrance to the vault, and by "the dim taper's light discover" where Julia lies. They raise the body, placing it on a chair, the "Gracioso" remarking—

How heavy Julias are when silent and at rest!
How light when chattering and afoot!

ROMEO.

He loves not who loves not e'en beyond the grave;
My saddened heart beats slowly and alone.
My queenly Julia, cold, icy death himself
Dares not to rob thee of a single charm.
The garish sun dies daily; and in his cold
And briny urn
Shadows with night his course until the morrow.
Oh beauteous, oh divinely fashioned flame,
Which dies not!
If love's chaste fire cannot woo thee to life,
How can I hope vain prayers will me avail?

[*Looking at Juliet.*]

Death here effaces nought; and that sweet face
So gentle and so pale! The parted lips,
So moist and life-like, smile! Oh! ope for me
Those ruby portals! Bless thy Romeo's ear
With music, words of happy love and hope!

He raises her head gently and places his hand upon her heart.

Ha! what is this? Surely I dream! Yes! yes!
'Tis but a flutter, as a bird's light wing,
When rising slowly through the morning air.—
She breathes! she breathes! great heavens, my Juliet lives!
Her heart beats, struggling, as it were, with pain.

The "Gracioso" observes—

I have seen some lovers madmen in my day,
But never such a madman, by my fay!

The "Gracioso" sprinkles some holy water over Julia's face.

JULIA.

Who calls? who speaks? oh, aching heart!
Poison! daggers! death! dear Romeo!

ROMEO.

Julia!

E

JULIA (*recovering slowly*).

Where am I—where? Romeo, my lord!
My love! my more than lord! Alas! alas!
How came I hither in this chill cold vault?
Oh, happy, happy greeting! Dare I trust
Mine eyes, or do I dream?

ROMEO.

Oh, my sweet love—my Julia!

JULIA.

Sweet star of fate! I breathe, I breathe again!
My life! my love! my Romeo!

ROMEO.

Sweet love, time presses; I have here hard by
A carriage: let us fly, and ere to-morrow's dawn
Shall gild Verona's towers
Thou wilt be mine, and safe beyond her walls.

JULIA.

Now do I know where truest bliss is found—
'Tis only through the heavy gates of grief.

Romeo and the "Gracioso" assist Julia to rise, and support her as they go out of the church, their light being extinguished.

Elena moves forward in the darkness—" 'Tis here, my brother said, we'd meet." She moves cautiously in the darkness; Andrés enters stealthily. Romeo moves onward, Julia holding his cloak. Romeo passes close to Elena, and whispers to Julia to hold his cloak tightly. Julia stumbles, but immediately regains her footing, and by mistake seizes Andrés' cloak, Elena seizing Romeo's. Julia whispers, "Where waits the carriage, love?" Andrés recognizes her voice, and thus the scene closes, with *exeunt* through one door Romeo and Elena, and through another Andrés and Julia.

So ends the second act.



HE third act opens exactly where the second act closed, the stage being still darkened. Enter Romeo, and Elena holding his cloak.

ROMEO.

Speak, Julia, love! speak, speak, my sweetest life!
The day is flickering in the eastern sky,
But darkness still denies me sight of thee.
Let mine ear drink that sweetest of all music,
Julia's voice!

ELENA (*aside*).

Julia! alas! she's dead—
And yet I dare not breathe the truth to him.

ROMEO.

If 'tis thy will I die, my sweetest love,
Let me not die of silence ! Is it fear
That seals those coral lips ?

ELENA (*aside*).

He dreams, or knows not yet that Julia's dead.

ROMEO.

If in the silent sorrow of thine heart
Thou but discourest with thine eyes, alas !
I see them not.

ELENA (*aside*).

How great will be the pressure of his grief
To know the truth ? I dare not tell him now
'Tis but Elena by his side.

JULIA (*cries without*).

Romeo, my Romeo, love, and honoured lord,
I am betrayed—undone !

ROMEO.

Sweet echo, pitying, soothes mine anxious ear.
But how hear I this, when all in vain
I've listened for the softest word ? Alas !
The zephyrs have been sporting with my pain.

ELENA (*aside*).

'Tis Julia's voice—and yet is Julia dead!

ROMEO.

Fly, fly, dark shadows, from the gloomy earth,
And let the coming dawn this riddle solve.
Speak but again, sweet love! oh! speak again!

ELENA.

Alas, I am not Julia, Romeo,
But Elena!

ROMEO.

Elena! How cam'st thou here?—
And by my side?

Elena relates here that, following his instructions, she came under cover of the darkness to the church door, [seizing his cloak when Julia stumbled.] Romeo rushes out to seek Julia, meets his kinsman Carlos, who tells him that Old Capelete and his faction are seeking him throughout the wood. The "Gracioso" now appears.

GRACIOSO.

The great Count Paris mid these mountains hunts,
With nigh three hundred greyhounds at his heels.

He continues his relation, and in a lengthy comic speech gives the whole of the scene between Julia and Andrés; when the former

discovers he is not Romeo, his approaches are indignantly repelled by Julia ; he exclaims—

ANDRÉS.

Though you shake heaven with shouts for Romeo,
'Twill nought avail thee. I am Andrés,
And love thee, Julia, more than he dare love !
Mine own, and not the hated Romeo's now.

Old Capelete and Count Paris enter, Julia in the meanwhile contriving to escape into another part of the wood.

JULIA.

My Romeo lost !—the hated Andrés still
Pursues me here. My father's anger, too,
Knows neither check nor pause. The Count
Seeks sweet Elena to destroy that dear,
Unwilling cause of all his jealousy.
Ye thick and leafy groves, oh ! shield a maid
From all these worldly ills !
For what sad fate doth cruel fortune now
Reserve the hapless, love-lorn Julia ?
The inconstant moon doth shadow forth my fate,
When hid by fleecy clouds. Oh, gracious heaven,
Protect and guard a helpless love-sick maid !

OLD CAPELETE (*within*).

Seek well on every side for Romeo !

COUNT PARIS (*within*).

Seek every glade and nook for Elena!

JULIA.

O whither dare I fly? my father's voice
I hear without. The Count with jealous rage
Seeks sweet Elena.
For Romeo, too, my angry father shouts.

Old Capete enters, and seeing in the obscure dawn what he
imagines to be the spirit of the dead Julia, addresses her thus :

OLD CAPELETE.

Oh, heavenly maiden in angelic garb,
Art thou a spirit from the shades of death?
How cam'st thou here? Deceitful shade,
All glistening in the garb of life, yet dead!
'Twas thine own hand that did the fatal deed,
Thyself that gave the poisoned draught.

JULIA.

Approach me not, thou mortal shape, nor seek
To thread these forest glades in swift pursuit.

She goes, but meeting the Count, returns.

JULIA (*aside*).

The Count! my blood, like very ice,
Seems curdling in my veins!

COUNT.

What! Julia here?

OLD CAPELETE.

It is no living Julia standing there ;
For did not we in Capelete's vault
Last evening lay her dead ?

COUNT.

If it be not sweet Julia's self, who can it be ?

OLD CAPELETE.

Hush! 'tis some spirit from a brighter sphere,
A vision that I dare not look upon.
I gaze, and lo! she fades, as yonder moon
Doth veil her beauty 'neath the vaporous cloud.
Oh, divine symbol of a cruel death,
Why cam'st thou hither, sweet angelic spirit,
Laden with the garb of life, yet lifeless?
I see, and yet I see not! Is't a dream?

COUNT.

Since we both see, it is no dream, methinks.
Then, let our sense of touch decide if she
Be mortal or divine.

JULIA.

Touch not! beware!

I know nought save this : I'm here alone ;
That heaven is bright, and angels full of mercy.

OLD CAPELETE.

How cam'st thou hither, child ?

JULIA.

All shall be known hereafter. Let me pass.

COUNT.

I care nought for the future—knowing this,
That I've been cheated—cheated, sir, by you.
No poisoned draught thou gavest to the maid ;
'Twas but to put a cheat upon me, Sir,
By simulated death, and juggling, thus
To give her o'er to Romeo.

OLD CAPELETE.

Be silent, Count !

Another word brings death to you or me.
Rather than see her hated Romeo's wife,
I'd plunge my steel from point to hilt
Through her false heart. If mortal, she is thine—
Immortal death's.

JULIA.

Here, sir, then strike and end my woes at once.

Let my warm blood like water flow : each drop
That ebbs shall leave thy dying daughter pure
And still more constant to her Romeo.
In death a corse of Romeo's second self—
My lover and my lord, for whom this heart
Alone doth beat.

His love he rescued from a living grave :
If that be crime, then let my bosom feel
But as the magnet to attract thy steel.

OLD CAPELETE.

Silence, unduteous child ! thy base intent
Demands a quick and deadly punishment.

He rushes forward to stab Julia, but Count Paris interposes.

COUNT PARIS.

Hold ! hold ! Capelete ! Slay her not—forbear !
Although unworthy thy fond love to share.
I love, alas ! and would not shed her blood !
That steel will not efface the love which fills
So full her maiden heart.
Loving as I must love, I know how deep
The wound, and how oblivion, though she's woo'd,
Still comes not at our call.
I would not seek to wed another's love ;
Love is not love, save it doth share alike.

The noble hope, the ever trusting faith,
Thrive not where love and hate together wed.

JULIA.

If thou dost hate me, Count, in truth
My love and Romeo both are safe.

COUNT.

Ah! would I could but blot my love with hate!

JULIA.

To try is to succeed when love is true.

OLD CAPELETE.

Though from my vengeance thou hast sav'd her, Count,
She dies another and more lingering death.
Within yon castle's gloomy dungeon walls
She expiates her crime in solitude
And prayer!—Ha! yonder comes Andrés.

JULIA.

Oh, cruel, cruel, and most traitorous fate!

Andrés enters at this moment, and informs Old Capelete and the Count that Romeo and the Montesco faction are scouring the forest in search of Julia: he counsels that they should summon all their adherents and attack the Montesco faction. Old Capelete

agrees, but first proposes that Julia shall be conducted to the fortress, which is fully garrisoned by the Capeletes. *Exeunt omnes.*

Enter ROMEO, CARLOS, and the "GRACIOSO."

ROMEO.

The bridge, you say, is ours ?

CARLOS.

Two hundred of our trustiest men
Are there and guard it. What is next to do ?

ROMEO.

Ah me !

CARLOS.

Be bold, but let calm prudence rule each step.

ROMEO.

Who speaks of prudence when my Julia's lost ?
How comfort grief like mine ? Break, break, my heart !

GRACIOSO.

Since you seem sure of vict'ry, sirs,
I would advise attack.
Shout boldly and surprise the castle ;
Batter down the walls about their ears
And scale the battlements perforce.
I'll lead—no, follow, that's the wisest course ;

Julia is there ; and if she be not dead
She'll be alive, and you may safely wed.

ROMEO (*to CARLOS*).

What force have they within the castle walls ?

GRACIOSO.

I did most carefully observe, and know
They mov'd their cannon to the wood below :
Ours is at hand ; and here's my weapon trusty,
Too often drawn to let the blade get rusty.
I think I'll fight—if courage fail not then,
Of victory be sure ! Set on like men !

JULIA (*without*).

Oh, father ! spare me for my Romeo's sake !

ROMEO.

'Tis Julia's voice makes music 'mid the trees :
No sounds so sweet, so exquisite as these,
Fall on the listening ear of those who love,
Like echo of an angel's voice above.

OLD CAPELETE.

Julia is dead, and I but now have slain her !
Fit expiation of her fatal sin

ROMEO.

Who speaks of death, while yet my Julia lives ?
Ere she be dead, yon hateful castle walls
Shall topple to the earth, and every stone
Lie heaped upon the earth. Come, Carlos, on !
My hate like fire within my bosom burns—
Unquenched, unquenchable, an eternal flame.
Revenge on Capelete and all who bear that name !

Romeo and Carlos rush out with drawn swords, leaving the
"Gracioso," who looks stealthily around.

GRACIOSO.

I'll seek the rear ; I'll not lead the way—
That is abundant honour for a slave.
Am I courageous ? no, but I am brave.
What can this valour mean ? I'll shout ;
I may be heard, and then I doubt
What I call courage may perchance be fear ;
I'll not speak loud lest listening folks should hear.
Still it costs little to seem bold ;
I'll fancy Capelete here, though old,
With six strong fellows at his back,
Swords drawn and ready to attack ;
Thus there'll be seven steels in all :
I pin me one against the wall

Then slay the rest till all the ground,
Covered with blood, appears one wound ;
Then come Montescos by, and see my blade
Dripping with gore. 'Tis our brave comrade !
They panting cry ; he's killed the seven,
And sent their souls unshrift to heaven.
But stay, suppose I kill but six,
The seventh may my heart transfix,
And let in daylight through my back !
My master comes, and cries, " Good lack !
How many did he kill ? " " All six," they say.
" But who kill'd number seven ? " Alas, the day !
How can I answer ? I am dead,
And there is no more to be done or said.
No, no ! let each man care for number one,
And leave to others all the fighting fun.
Most men would rather talk than fight ;
And they may say, when I am out of sight,
" He kill'd not one." I'll sheath my blade,
And leave to such as like, the cold-steel trade.
It is a selfish world, when all is done :
I'll stay behind ; take care of number one.

OLD CAPELETE (*without*).

Carlos Montesco, our prisoner, lead
Well guarded to the castle gate.

GRACIOSO.

Methinks 'tis wiser I should take some ease
Amid the matted branches of these trees.

He ascends a tree, when enter Old Capelete and soldiers with
Carlos a prisoner; Count Paris follows in haste.
The Count and Andrés enter.

COUNT.

Our people, routed, fly along the banks
Of the Adige. Our cannon are all taken,
Romeo in full pursuit! Let us now seek
Our safety, sir, within yon castle walls. [*They fly.*

ROMEO (*without*).

Montescos to the rescue! on, friends, on!
And follow to the castle with all speed.

Romeo enters, and the "Gracioso" stealthily descends from his
hiding-place in the tree.

GRACIOSO.

On, on, brave friends! I'll follow out of hand,
And climb the walls with foremost of our band.

Romeo questions the "Gracioso," who states that he has not seen
Carlos. Romeo then orders the cannon to be so placed as to com-
mand the castle: they open fire and a breach is made.

GRACIOSO.

This same black powder makes a roaring fire,
If, like good cooks, they only keep it up.
Of all the Capeletes, daughter and her sire,
We'll make an omlet, on which all may sup.

A signal is made from the tower, and old Capelete holds parley with Romeo, who tells him that his appeal is too late now Julia's dead. Capelete sues in vain, Romeo commanding his men to continue the fire of the artillery.

ROMEO.

This day calm reason holds in us no sway,
My soul is only thirsting for revenge to-day!

Count Paris appears on the battlements.

GRACIOSO.

Ha! one more Moor upon the walls I spy;
That's one more Moor amid the flames to fry.

After much parleying, in which Elena and Carlos take part, but in vain, Old Capelete at last appears holding Julia's hand. Of course the attack ceases.

JULIA.

Romeo! my lord, behold thy love,

G

ROMEO.

Great heavens, it is my Julia! and alive!

JULIA.

Kind heaven ordains it that I shall be thine.

ROMEO.

What would you, lovely maid?

JULIA.

For my sake pardon all.

ROMEO.

Then long live all of Capelete's house
If it be Julia's wish! In heedless rage
I listened not to sister, friend, or kin;
But now my Julia and my love doth speak,
My heart springs upward to my lips, and answers Yes.

The Count and Elena are of course reconciled, and Old Capelete forgives the lovers.

ROMEO.

Now joyous hours on every side increase,
And let this feud of both our houses cease;
Good Don Francisco Rojas asks the hands of all,
And to his share let your kind plaudits fall.

FINIS.



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